

# WHETSTONE GLOSSARY

## ***To Give Jesus a Fresh Hearing Among Those Who've Heard the Spiel.***

This WHETSTONE GLOSSARY is a wordlist. It is a basic listing of words important to people who intend to follow Christ. Its aim is to be very *practical*. It will be updated from time to time. At Whetstone Church in Brattleboro, Vermont understanding these terms is essential for our unity and work. The goal is that we may “*be of one mind...*” It’s not about uniformity (outward conformity) but unity (agreement on fundamental realities). Paul wanted the people at Corinth to,

<sup>1Co 1:10</sup> ...agree with one another so that there may be no divisions among you and that you may be perfectly united in mind and thought.

### **First, Seven Key Terms:**

#### **LOVE:**

**Is having a *will for good* for someone, or “bene-volence” (good-will). Love wills the best that can possibly be for another and does everything possible to make it happen.**

It need not include enjoying, liking or agreeing with someone. Regarding the great command of Christ to love God and neighbor, (Mark 12:30) it is possible to even love your *enemy*—to intend and even work toward God’s best for them (Jesus would never tell us to do what is impossible). God’s unchanging love for us freely given us while we were yet sinners, is constant and undying. (Gk. *Agape*, Heb. *Hessed*). Love is the most powerful force humans can experience. *God is love* 1 John 4:8,16.

*Let all that you do be done in love.* 1 Corinthians 16:14

#### **GOD:**

God is best thought of as a kind, loving, strong and wise Father who has much in store for his children and who desires to personally share with each and all the riches of his glory through all eternity. God is One God in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Through God the Son, God can be known and loved by ordinary people—as a joyful, radiant, friendly, accessible, and totally competent being—God is what we actually live in (Ac 17:28). All over the world he is celebrated by billions of people; his name is lifted up, he is lived-with and loved and served and presented by all kinds of people across time, space, continents and culture. God’s purpose in human history is to gather to himself a people in whom he may dwell, from every tribe and language and people

and nation whose whole character individually and corporately is that of his, their Father.

### **HUMAN BEING:**

**Every human being is a never-ceasing spiritual being with an eternal destiny in God.**

As such you are an *invisible* spirit in a visible body. No one has ever seen *you* since the dimensions that make up your personhood are invisible. The word “adam” means “man”; both male and female, created by God in his image with five eternal invisible dimensions: will, mind, emotions, social context and soul, housed for awhile in a temporal physical body.

Dimensions of the human self as created by God in his image:

- **Heart:** Heart(central), spirit (non-physical) and will (volitional) are all central to the human being. The will is the ability to initiate actions and events which would not happen otherwise. It is the “executive center” of the self. This power is sovereign to the individual (though many people choose not to know this). Yet the Bible says: “*men are without excuse...*” Rom 1:20
- **Mind:** Where thoughts originate and are processed. Thoughts allow your will to choose. Thoughts and feeling always work together.
- **Emotions:** Feelings make us want to do or not do something we are thinking about. Feelings are either pleasant or painful. Either can lead to good or evil.
- **Body:** The body your personal power-pack. It is the physical dwelling place of the Spirit of God. It houses “*instruments of righteousness*”, (or unrighteousness). 1 Cor 6:19
- **Social Context:** God designed everyone to have roots in other people and *everyone* is rooted in God. 1 John 4:20. Rom 13:8.
- **Soul:** Your soul is what runs your life. As your will makes decisions your soul fits them into everything you think, feel, say, do and how you relate to others. Ps 42:5

All humans are personally accountable to God for all choices, words and actions. As Jesus said, <sup>Mt 12:37</sup> *For by your words you will be acquitted, and by your words you will be condemned.*” So if “your words” have included, “Lord Jesus, forgive me a sinner...” you can look forward to a bright eternal future with him. If you choose to not know the God who makes himself known in Christ, you will realize—forever—the fear of death that troubled your mind for your entire life.

### **KINGDOM OF GOD:**

**God’s kingdom is *what God is now doing*. It is where what he wants done is done. It is the range of his effective will. A kingdom is essentially what a king does. It is where what the king wants done is done.** Christ reigns through the heavens infinitely and eternally, yet currently in human hearts and our earthly environs he has made a

sovereign decision *not* to rule *unless* he is personally invited to come and rule the heart of a person. He waits patiently for people to realize who he is and surrender their heart and whole life to him. Have you invited him to rule your heart today?

At the right time God will reveal his glory in power until it covers the whole world as the waters cover the sea. Until that time all creation groans—and we with it! (Just watch the news—what you hear is creation groaning). <sup>Heb 2:8-9</sup> *In putting everything under him, God left nothing that is not subject to him. Yet at present we do not see everything subject to him. <sup>9</sup> But we see Jesus,...*

God's kingdom is God acting. What God is actually now doing in time, space, matter, energy, eternity and in humanity.

### **What God is now doing (his kingdom):**

- **Reconciling** all things to himself in Christ 2 Cor 5:19.
- **Perfecting** a people for himself, souls for everlasting careers in his eternal universe. Out of human history will come an awesome community of loving persons who will be a dwelling place for God himself. This is the one and only purpose of all of human history!
- **Making up his treasured possession.** “They will be mine,” says the LORD Almighty, “in the day when I make up my treasured possession. I will spare them, just as in compassion a man spares his son who serves him. Malachi 3:17.
- **Proclaiming justice** to the ethnos (nations). Mt 12:18.
- **Leading** justice to victory. Mt 12:21.
- **Preparing** to hand over the kingdom to God the Father after he is done,
- **Destroying** all dominion, authority and power. 1Cor 15:24-25.
- **Reigning** until he puts all his enemies under his feet. 1Cor 15:25 ...by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control.

This is God's kingdom—what he's now doing and what he invites us to join him in doing. Our eternal destiny (when we pass from this life and join Christ in the fullness of his kingdom) will look like this: We will be absorbed in a tremendously creative team effort (joining the triune community of Father, Son and Holy Spirit), with unimaginably splendid leadership, on an inconceivably vast plane of activity, with ever more comprehensive cycles of productivity, creativity and enjoyment. That's heaven.

### **ETERNAL LIFE:**

**The interactive, intimate relationship we have with Christ, which begins now and goes on forever.** It is the eternal and exclusive relationship a human being has with the one

true living God through his Son Jesus Christ in his Holy Spirit. Jesus himself defined eternal life as intimately *knowing* God: <sup>John 17:3</sup> *Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ...* This interactive experience of life is refreshed for us by Christ himself everyday. Eternal life is much more than merely existing forever or going to heaven after you die. In fact one could say, eternal life is living in the kingdom of heaven *before* you die.

### **DISCIPLE:**

A disciple is an apprentice, a constant learner who follows Jesus the Master of life. Being a disciple is a secure status graciously conferred on us by Christ. It is not an attainment we earn. To be a disciple of Jesus is the greatest privilege anyone can have. As a disciple of Jesus Christ I am learning to lead my life under the good government of Christ as he would lead my life if he were me. This is the most important thing in the world to me (Luke 14:25-35) so I am continually arranging and re-arranging my whole life around it. Jesus is constantly teaching me how to do this.

Some benefits of being a disciple are:

- Freedom from all bondage—including bondages to sin, addiction, substances, relationships and actions. (John 8:30-34)
- The powerful love of Christ is ruling my life. (John 13:35)
- I am bearing fruit for goodness. (John 15:8)
- I will never experience death. (John 8:51-52, 1 John 2:17)
- I am learning how to do the things he taught; I am becoming that kind of person.
- I am learning how to live in His kingdom as I go about my everyday life. “the Lord is at hand.” (Phil. 4:5, Col. 3:17)
- I am learning how to act in the power of God. (Eph. 3:20, Heb. 11:21, Col. 1:11)
- I am not just *trying* to be good, I am joyously *training* to be like Jesus.

### **GOSPEL:**

The gospel is the *good news* that anyone can now and forever live within the realm of God’s benevolent rule presently available to all persons—every tribe, language, people and ethnos through the Person and finished work of Jesus Christ. The gospel is not only about living in the kingdom of heaven after I die. It’s about starting to live in the kingdom of heaven now *before* I die.

## Here Are More Terms, Listed More or Less Alphabetically:

**Anger:** A response towards those who have interfered with us, it includes a will to harm them. An explosive reaction in me caused when I perceive that my will has been crossed. Yet, <sup>Jas 1:20</sup> *man's anger does not bring about the righteous life that God desires.* That's why <sup>Jas 1:19</sup> *Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry,...* Anger is disintegrative weakness, while patience is strength.

**Anxiety:** Worry. Worried anxiety is "prayer to yourself". If you can worry, you can pray to the Lord who can actually do something about your situation.

**Belief:** Readiness to act as if what you believe were true. Belief is when your whole being is set to act as if something is so. Your actions *always* reflect what you actually believe (not necessarily what you may profess or commit to).

**Bible:** The unique written Word of God. It is inerrant in its original form and infallible in all of its forms for the purpose of guiding you into a life-saving relationship with God in His kingdom. The Bible contains a body of knowledge without which human beings cannot survive. It was written by intelligent people for intelligent people about the most important things in life. It reliably fixes the boundaries of everything God will ever say to humankind.

**Body:** The human body is our independent power source for action. It is the "power pack" that God has assigned to us as the field of our freedom and development. Our body is the place from which we live.

**Celebration:** The completion (end, focus, goal) of worship, as it dwells on the greatness of God as shown in His goodness to us.

**Christian:** Originally and currently a culturally descriptive term for people who are identified in some way with Jesus Christ. Jesus and his disciples are never recorded as using the term "Christian". It appears incidentally 3 times in the Bible. The word "disciple" was used by Jesus and his followers all the time and in some of his most important commands to us. "Disciple" occurs in some form about 300 times in the Bible. Using the term "Christian" as a political description (e.g. "a Christian country") is not found in the Bible and has no real significance to ultimate reality. We may use this term culturally but when speaking of our identity and status as God's people we use the same word Jesus used, "disciple" (an apprentice, a lifelong learner of Jesus Christ).

**Character:** That internal, overall structure of the self that is revealed by our long-run patterns of behavior and from which our actions automatically arise. What we dwell on in thought is one of the strongest indications of the nature of our character.

**Cross:** Three times Jesus says to his disciples: <sup>Mt 16:24</sup> *“If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.”* In the culture of the day, these words were only ever spoken by a Roman soldier to a condemned criminal on his way to execution. It meant one thing: The end of one’s life. When Jesus commands us to take up our cross, it means the end of *our life our way* and the beginning of His life in us. It’s the great exchange: your junk for His riches. Do you want Christ’s resurrection life in you? Then take up your cross...it’s your place to stand against the corruption in this world that seeks to destroy you.

**Commands of Christ:** Jesus let his will be known in over 200 commands in the New Testament. They are not law or dogma, but Christ’s gift of specific information on how best to live as a human being on planet earth.

**Contempt:** Contempt is a subtle unholy degrading of a person, of myself, even of Christ. A covert defiance: Viewing others (or myself) as detestable, weak, of no worth, empty, hollow, inadequate. To think or speak of someone in such a degrading way that they are dehumanized. It rejects, belittling the deep need we all have to belong and is inherently poisonous. It stabs the soul to its core and deflates its powers of life. Contempt even regards God as negligible. This is raw ego, the first of sins; saying: *‘It is futile to serve God.’* (Malachi 3:14), a debasing of Christ’s presence, his will and the things of God. Contempt is a disregard for the cross.

**Church:** God’s people living with him in his kingdom. In the Bible, the church is called Christ’s bride, his believing faithful people known by him all over the world in every culture, every tribe and nation, from every tongue and over the centuries of history. The Church of Jesus Christ is a strongly biblical community of believers. A family that warmly nurtures and equips its members, focuses on evangelism that produces disciples who are filled with God’s Holy Spirit, all day everyday. In the church people becoming like Christ in heart, mind, feeling, body, relationships and soul— forever. The church reproduces itself to the ends of the earth— until Christ returns for his bride. Most of the church is already in heaven. We who are still here on earth are the only members in the church who can still respond to Christ’s great Commission to be and make disciples and be his witnesses to the ends of the

earth.

**Disciple:** Someone who has decided to be with another person (who is a master at something) as an apprentice, in order to become capable of doing what the master does or to become what that person is.

**Disciple of Jesus:** Anyone who is currently learning from Jesus (the master teacher of the human race) how to lead their everyday life as he would lead their life if he were they. The place where this takes place is where you are. Being a disciple of Jesus may be described as staying as close to Jesus Christ as possible.

**Disciplines:** Activities (some can be habits) we engage in that are within our power and enable us to do what we cannot do by direct effort, because in this way we meet the action of God (grace) with us, and the outcome is humanly inexplicable. This is what it means to depend on a power that is not from us. Disciplines are the gateways into this power. Some spiritual disciplines are: calling on God, Bible study, prayer, solitude, silence, secret obedience, worship, the public reading of scripture.

**Death:** Separation of the spirit from the body. The Bible says <sup>Heb 9:27</sup> *...man is destined to die once, and after that to face judgment.* When a person dies they meet Jesus Christ face to face at his judgment seat. People who have chosen to be close to Christ will enjoy that relationship forever without restriction. Those who have chosen to ignore Christ and the forgiveness he offers will forever realize the fears that plagued them throughout their lifetime on earth.

**Ethics:** A human device for directing how we ought to live. Ethics can point the way to good, but it lacks the power and authority to actually provide a life that is good.

**Evil:** Human wrath that is an unrestrained impulse to hurt or harm. It is the raw intention to harm others. (Evil gets worse when combined with "righteousness" [a false sense of one's own superiority], which is a deadly combination.)

**Flesh:** is your body and its desires. Your body is good. Your flesh is created by God. God designed your flesh so if you wish you can do many things in your flesh apart from God (which is what we have all done). Your flesh has been "trained" by the world, evil and your life without God. When the Holy Spirit comes to live in your heart as you choose to surrender to Christ, He fills you and empowers you to *retrain* your flesh to obey Christ. In these days God's Spirit is being poured out all over the world on all flesh. (Joel 2:28;

Acts 2:17)

**Faith:** Confidence grounded in reality. Faith is proof, knowledge, substance, solid evidence—not just a subjective psychological state of mind like “being sure of”. (Abraham, called “the father of the faithful”, acted within a rich framework of factual, actual, experiential *knowledge* of God, *reality* of God’s actual real-time interactions with him; not in “blind leaps into the dark”) Faith sees the reality of the unseen or invisible, and is ready to act as if the good anticipated were already in hand. Faith is not anything at all remotely resembling a blind leap. A faith venture supersedes the immediate reality of not knowing where you are going.

**Forgiveness:** The act of pardoning someone. In human relationships it’s as necessary as oxygen. Life cannot work without it.

**Good:** That which is *good* for anything is what fulfills its created *nature*.

**Grace:** God acting in our life to bring about, and to enable us to do, what we cannot do on our own. (2 Tim. 2:1)

Grace is for your whole life and not just for forgiveness. Grace is not opposed to effort (action) though it is opposed to earning (attitude). Grace works hand-in-glove with discipline in the life of the disciple of Jesus.

Since the kingdom of God is God acting, grace is God acting in our life. Grace is the free inclusion of people in what God is actually doing (his kingdom). Thus, it is much more than forgiveness or God’s unmerited favor for sinners. When Peter says (2 Pet 3.18) “*grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ...*” he is not saying grow in forgiveness but grow in your inclusion and joining in what God is doing.

**Growth:** Peter says (2 Pet 3.18) “*grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ...*” To grow as a fully developing follower of Jesus Christ is to grow in your confidence and participation in what God is doing—reconciling all things to himself in Christ. <sup>2Co 5:18</sup> *All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ (inclusion) and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: <sup>19</sup> that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men’s sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation (joining him).*

**Holiness:** Otherness or separateness from the ordinary realm of human existence.

**Holy:** Other. Pertaining to or coming from the one and only peerless God.



**Holy Spirit:** The third person of the Godhead. God invisible, eternal, immortal now being poured out on all human flesh all over the earth (Acts 2:17) and now literally present in his people (church) on earth. And, yet, as in the book of Acts, so many people, even believers, live as if they “do not even know there is a Holy Spirit.” (Acts 19:2).

**Hope:** Joyous anticipation of good.

Eager anticipation of good not yet come. When Christ came he brought hope—something the ancient world had *never* seen: a solid hope—that does not disappoint. Hope is experienced mainly through one’s *character* as it grows to be like Christ’s. “*Character produces hope.*” (Rom 5:4)

**Insurgent Church:** God's people living with Him and one another in this corrupt world system joining with God’s plan and his Spirit to overcome evil with good in human history.

**Joy:** Joy is a pervasive and constant sense of wellbeing. It’s not pleasure, a mere sensation. It is well-being based on knowledge of how things truly are. A gratifying sense of an ever-increasing, inexorable, indomitable, encompassing good that is well-secured. Joy is one mark of the present reign of Christ’s kingdom within a person (“*the kingdom of God is righteousness, peace and joy...*” Romans 14:17). It was said of Jesus the Messiah that he had greater joy than anyone else around him! (Heb 1:9, Ps 45:6,7) Dallas Willard always reminded us that the preacher should be the happiest person in town.

**Knowledge:** the ability to deal with things [to represent things] as they truly are on an appropriate basis of thought and experience.)

**Kingdom Living:** Living in the character and power of God. Includes accepting the fact that we don’t have to have our way. Living from the resources of the Kingdom. Living in the ambiance of the kingdom.

**Knowing:** The act of representing (thinking, talking about, dealing with) a matter *as it is*, on an appropriate basis of thought and experience. Knowledge, biblically, is interactive relationship with what is known.

**Law:** The course, but *not* the source of rightness.

**Life:** Self-directing, self-initiating, self-sustaining activity. Spiritual Life: A kind of self-

directing, self-initiating, self-sustaining activity that is independent of the physical.

**Marriage:** To give oneself to another person in the most intimate and inclusive of human relationships, to support him or her for good in every way possible – physically, emotionally, and spiritually; and in every conceivable dimension of his or her being. Our premise: *It takes one whole person one whole lifetime to know one whole person.* The one and only way humans were designed to know intimately is within the mutual submission to each other in awe of the Lord Jesus Christ and the actual record of what he said and did. Marriage is a particular kind of union of body, soul and spirit under God, not just whatever we say it is. The various alternatives being discussed must meet this challenge.

**Obedience:** Actions or speaking (with respect to Christ's commands) which interface people with reality. Ultimate reality being Christ and his Kingdom. Obedience leads to righteousness (Rom 6:16) and immediate interactive relationship to God (eternal life).

**Patience:** Composure of will, word, action, emotion resulting in maintenance of temper (strength). The ability to stay together; integrity, to not fall apart, dis-integrate, decompose or dissolve. Patience is a cohesive strength, anger is a disintegrative weakness. Patience maintains wholeness. Anger acted on adulterates, separates and divides. God knows we will have flashes of anger but he warns us not to nurture anger into the fullness of sin. (Eph 4:26, Ps 4:4).

**Peace:** The rest of one's will that results from assurance about how things will turn out.

A will at peace ceases striving with God and manipulating others and reposes with total abandon and total allegiance to the greatness of God and his willingness and powerful ability to help us. *But I have stilled and quieted my soul; like a weaned child with its mother, like a weaned child is my soul within me.* Psalm 131:2. This is peace. Peace is one mark of the present reign of Christ's kingdom in a person (Romans 14:17).

**Regeneration:** Entry of God's nature and life into our real existence and identity. Rebirth.

**Reality:** What you eventually encounter when you insist on ignoring it. Ultimate reality is Jesus Christ and his kingdom. Undoubtedly, *"Every knee will bow and every tongue confess, Jesus is Lord."*

**Reason:** the mental power to trace out connections in reality. It indicates the human destiny appointed by God. The reasonable person is the one who is devoted to truth, and to finding it and living in it by all available means.

**Repent:** to change the way you've been thinking and acting. Do a 180.

**Religious Consumer:** A person who attends church functions without ever deciding to follow Jesus Christ.

**Righteousness:** This is an archaic term not used much in our culture. But it is a powerful and tremendously liberating reality for the disciple of Jesus Christ. Righteousness is the true innermost goodness and rightness that Christ freely gives to those willing to receive. It is the actual reality of our true inner rightness and goodness before God and men. *Dakiosune* (Gk) often translated righteousness, is a *gift* from Christ and can never be earned. Thus it is a rightness and goodness beyond law and thus much better than the kind you think you can earn and work for. When Christ's righteousness lives in you, you can be fully assured that in your inmost being you are truly good and right before God and man—because of this *gift* from Christ. This takes you off the treadmill of trying to be a good person and sets you on a course of training to reign in life with Christ. Righteousness is one mark of the present reign of Christ's kingdom. (Romans 14:17).

**Salvation:** Participating now in what Jesus is doing on earth. Salvation is a life to be lived now and forever, not merely an event to be remembered or anticipated. "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). This verse says much more than "...God sent his Son to die on the cross for our sins so we could go to heaven when we die." Remembering Jesus' definition for eternal life in John 17:3, it reads: "...God gave his Son so that whoever believes in him shall not die but have an intimate, interactive relationship with Him which starts today and goes on forever, not being interrupted even by death."

**Self-Control:** The ability to do what you intend to do when and how you intend to do it.

**Significance:** We were built to count, as water is made to run downhill. We are each individually placed in a specific context to count in ways *no one else* does. That is our destiny. That is our significance.

**Sin:** Negligence, interference and impositions on God's plan to include us in what He is doing. Literally, missing the mark, futility. Action, attitude or speaking which does not interface with ultimate reality (Jesus and his kingdom). Sin is when we inwardly say "yes" to temptation in our heart, when we would do the deed, even if we do not actually do it.

**Spirit:** Unbodily personal power.

**Temptation:** Is a misguided detour. If you take the detour it will cause you to miss a personal appointment with the Spirit of Christ. You will miss a blessing and may never know it. God has plans for you everyday and so does the devil. If obedience is a GPS to your appointment with God's grace, then sin is an out of date GPS leading to disappointment.

**Ten Commandments:** God's gift of specific information on how best to conduct human existence.

**Truth:** Is that which never changes. Jesus is the truth. Jesus said: <sup>John 18:38</sup> *Everyone on the side of truth listens to me.* Christ is the truth, the same today, yesterday and forever. He has never changed and never will. Ultimate reality is Jesus Christ and his Kingdom. This is true. It is possible for humans to possess knowledge of the truth. (Knowledge is defined as: the ability to deal with things [to represent things] as they truly are on an appropriate basis of thought and experience.) A thought or statement is true provided that what it is about is as it is represented in the thought or statement. All truth is absolute truth.

**Virtue:** The combination of skill, wisdom, power and steadfastness for good.

**Work:** The production of value. Work is a fundamental structure of love as people live within the Kingdom of God. (Play would be the production of value that is not necessary.)

**World:** is the organization of flesh into a social system. People in the world do things in the flesh apart from God. This forms into a world system marked by flesh-lust, eye-lust, human avarice and pride. We live in the world but we are not owned by it. Jesus said, *"In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have over- come the world."* <sup>John 16:33</sup>

**Worship:** The overall character of the renewed thought life. Praise is the audible and visible expression of love for God by people who worship him. Worship is the only safe place for a human being to stand.

This wordlist is meant to be a very practical glossary of terms. Given the nature of the world, humanity and the unseen realm, the most practical thing one can do is to possess a working understanding of spiritual realities. "Spiritual" is not the antithesis of "practical". They are inextricably related. This wordlist is humbly offered as bread from the hand of one beggar to another! We are not experts but learners. Take what you can from it and leave the rest. Your questions and comments are very welcome especially as they may lead to joint inquiry into these most important issues of life. Email: [jim@whetstonebratt.com](mailto:jim@whetstonebratt.com). Further reading: See Dallas Willard. [www.dwillard.org](http://www.dwillard.org).